

FROM CELL PHONES TO THE SOVIET UNION

CHANIE WOLF

The twelfth of the Rambam's 13 Principles of Faith is: "I believe with perfect faith in the coming of the Moshiach. Even if he delays, I will wait every day for him to come." The Rebbe teaches us that this does not mean that every day we should wait for Moshiach's ultimate coming, but that every day we should wait expectantly for Moshiach to come *on that very day.*

Close your eyes for a moment and think: "I believe and expect that Moshiach will come today."

What comes up? How does it feel?

For many, a little gnawing voice of Amalek whispers, "But we've been waiting for thousands of years… and the Rebbe said 25 years ago that the time for *Geulah* has arrived… why today? How today?"

Indeed, if we think of *Geulah* as a sudden, out-of-nowhere miraculous transformation, it may be difficult to anticipate it finally happening—now. Yet the Rebbe teaches us that the *Geulah* is in fact a gradual process. The revelation of Aleph—Hashem's Oneness—in our world began with Avraham Avinu, continued with *Mattan Torah*, accelerated with the introduction of Chassidus… and is finally just about ready to overcome the deception of *galus.*

We need only open our eyes, for the signs are everywhere that the world is at the cusp of the miraculous era our ancestors dreamed about.

Let's start with your smartphone, assuming you're one of the estimated 25% of the world's population that owns one. Thirty years ago, almost no-one owned a cellphone. Many of our parents or grandparents grew up without telephones in their homes at all. Of course, it isn't just phones. This drastic change in lifestyle is reflected in numerous other areas of life—home appliances and conveniences such as washers and dryers, refrigerators, and indoor plumbing; greatly expanded wardrobes; disposable everything. And food. So. Much. Food. My mother recalls receiving a treat in Communist Russia — one orange, to split amongst the entire family.

In the words of the Rambam[1]:

ובאותו הזמן לא יהיה שם לא רעב... הטובה תהא מושפעת הרבה וכל המעדנין מצויין כעפר—"At that time, there will be no hunger… good things will flow in abundance and all the delights will be as freely available as dust."

So you pick up this device and connect. With everyone. You call, text, send pictures and videos, and the world virtually shrinks. Years ago, I waited two weeks to receive a letter from my cousin who was in seminary across the globe. Today, I can see what my nieces and nephews in South Africa are doing—in real-time. Once-abstract spiritual concepts such as "an eye that sees and an ear that hears" are now becoming physical reality.

This is a foretaste of what the *navi*[2] says, ונגלה כבוד ה' וראו כל בשר יחדו כי פי ה' דבר—"And the glory of Hashem will be revealed and all *flesh* will *see* that the mouth of G-d has spoken." This *passuk* teaches us that when Moshiach comes, we will gain the ability to perceive Hashem's glory with physical, sensory vision. Having the tangible metaphors of satellites and videos to understand Hashem's omnipresence is a hint of this phenomenon.

And you connect with Hashem too. With a few clicks and swipes, whether you are sitting on your couch or waiting in a doctor's office, you can learn Chassidus, explained in language that is easy to

1 Rambam, Mishne Torah, Hilchos Melachim 12:5
2 Yeshayahu 40:5

understand, easy to apply to daily life. You can watch videos of the Rebbe, study *Chitas,* or look up sources in online libraries of *sefarim.*

Speaking of Torah, the explosion of Torah knowledge and scholarship in our generation has been magnificent. Translations, compilations and new editions of all types of *sefarim* are published constantly. Most of us have more *sefarim* in our homes than our great-grandparents ever saw. And it is not only a privileged few who have access to Torah learning, as it was for thousands of years; today, learning Torah is for everyone—men, women, and children.

כי מלאה הארץ דעה את ה'— "The earth will be filled with knowledge of Hashem"[3]

The advancements in Torah learning and publishing have also contributed to an increased ability for all Yidden to keep *halachah* properly. Confused about *tznius*? Giving *maaser*? What you may request of a non-Jew on Shabbos? Where there was once obscurity or ignorance, today there is an abundance of halachic literature on just about any subject.

This, together with recent technological advancements and material abundance, enables us to observe the *mitzvos* on an unprecedented level of accuracy and *hiddur*. From the availability of choice *esrogim* to the perfect manufacturing of *tefillin* and state-of-the-art, fully-equipped *mikvaos*, we can perform many *mitzvos* in an ideal manner for the first time in history.

And where governments—notably the Soviet Union—once fought Yiddishkeit, now they openly encourage and enable its growth!

והנה הגדר דביאת המשיח הוא שקיום המצוות יהי' אז בתכלית השלימות— "The definition of Moshiach's coming is that the fulfillment of *mitzvos* will be at its utmost perfection"[4]

Now take a minute to check up some information about your trusty phone. Where was it made? Japan? China? Where were the apps you're using invented? Today's global economy reflects the modern understanding that cooperation between nations benefits everyone, whereas the traditional policies of competition and aggression left everyone a loser. However imperfect its performance, the concept of a United Nations devoted to preventing unnecessary wars is revolutionary. From Kayin until World War II, the world spent thousands of years considering conflict and bloodshed acceptable. Suddenly, peace became the ideal. After the fall of Communism, the world powers began collaborating on arms reduction, redirecting funds to more peaceful and productive purposes.

This trend continues today in all areas: Books with relationship advice fill the store shelves, companies are shifting to collaborative, team-working models, and lawsuits give way to mediation.

ובאותו הזמן לא יהי' שם... ולא מלחמה ולא קנאה ולא תחרות— "At that time there will be… no war, no jealousy and no competition…"[5]

These are only a few of the many revolutionary advancements that we are experiencing today. After thousands of years of *avodah*, of Yidden elevating the world one *mitzvah* at a time, the world is beginning to look the way the Rambam, based on our *neviim,* describes *Geulah*. If we look with open eyes, we will see. We will feel. We will believe. And we will anticipate Moshiach's coming—today!



This eleventh installment of The Moshiach Page is dedicated to our beloved Founder, Mrs. Brana Sheina Deitsch, a"h, shown here with her oldest child, Reb Yosef Deitsch of New Haven, CT.

Chanie Wolf lives with her husband Yitzchok and their four young children in Crown Heights. A teacher and assistant principal at Bais Rivkah Seminary, she is passionate about Geulah, Chassidus and their relevance to the lives of Lubavitcher women and girls.

3 Yeshayahu 11:9

4 Rambam, Mishne Torah, Hilchos Melachim 11:1 as explained in the Rebbe's words